

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

Washington 25, D.C.



Honorable John W. McCormack
Speaker of the House of
Representatives
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Mr. Speaker:

Transmitted herewith for referral to the appropriate Committee is a draft bill "To amend Title V of the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949 to incorporate therein provisions relating to the disposal of certain records of the United States Government, and for other purposes" together with an explanation and justification of the bill and an analysis of its provisions.

This proposed legislation is part of the legislative program of the General Services Administration for the 88th Congress, 2nd Session.

At the present time statutory provisions relating to the disposal of records are contained in the Act of July 7, 1943 (57 Stat. 380; 44 U.S.C. 366-380). These would be repealed by section 3 of the enclosed bill, which incorporates similar provisions in a new section 508 of the Federal Records Act of 1950 (64 Stat. 583; 44 U.S.C. 392-396, 397-401) constituting Title V of the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949.

While it appears desirable to make the records disposal legislation part of the general legislation relating to records management, the principal purpose of the bill is to vest new authority in the Administrator of General Services to initiate schedules for the disposal of records in those cases where the originating agency fails to submit schedules or provides longer retention periods than appear to be warranted by the importance of the records affected. Appropriate procedures are provided for cases where agreement regarding any particular schedule is not reached between the Administrator and the agency head.

A more detailed discussion of this new provision, and the other changes in the present legislation which the bill would effect, will be found in the enclosed statement and analysis.

This proposal arises from a suggestion made in the recent General Accounting Office report on National Archives and Records Service activities to the effect that GSA should take positive steps to obtain the establishment of retention periods for large volumes of records now held in the regional records centers on an indefinite retention basis, with no disposal periods established for them.

GSA urges the prompt consideration and enactment of this bill since we consider that it will promote economy and efficiency in the important field of records management.

The bill, if enacted, would not involve any additional expenditures by GSA and would, we believe, in the long run result in reductions in the expense Government-wide of storing and administering records.

The Bureau of the Budget has advised that, from the standpoint of the Administration's program, there is no objection to the submission of this proposed legislation to the Congress.

Sincerely yours,

Enclosures